

NOTiCIAS DEL OSO

November 18, 2009

#4

If you only read one newsletter all year, you should make it this one.

Each of the ESL students sitting in your classroom has taken the TELPAS and/or gone through assessment at the BEES center. Both of these provide us with information about their language acquisition levels and what kind of challenges we might encounter while teaching our ELLs.

Below, I will help you understand what each rating means in Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing for the classroom. Be on the lookout toward the end of this week for a list of all of the ESL students' language levels that I am currently compiling from their folders. Until then, see if you can guess what your students' language acquisition levels are based on their work in class.

Erin Van Sickle

Decoding TELPAS scores for the classroom

Beginner

At Berry, there aren't many Beginner students. However, we may encounter more in the future. These students will not want to speak, will understand few English instructions, and may not turn work. They have little or no ability to understand English in academic settings.

Listening

- Struggle to understand simple conversations
- Cannot identify individual words and phrases
- Remain silent
- Watch for cues
- May not seek clarification

Speaking

- Use single words or "survival phrases."
- Often give up or remain silent.
- Pronunciation inhibits conversation and understanding.

Reading

- Understands little or no reading unless vocabulary recently practiced.
- May recognize signs or logos in text.
- May refuse to read aloud

Writing

- Unable to use English in compositions with the exception of high-frequency words.
- Cannot participate in grade-appropriate activities.

Intermediate

We have a small population of intermediate students here. These students are characterized by a similar reluctance to beginners in terms of speaking, as well as need explanations with lower-level vocabulary. They have the ability to understand simple, high-frequency words used routinely.

Listening

- Usually understand directions and simple conversation
- Often identify key words but cannot understand the Big Picture
- Asks speaker to repeat, clarify or slow down.

Speaking

- Use simple, original messages and participate in social conversations.
- May hesitate or stutter frequently.
- Pronunciation usually does not drastically inhibit understanding.

Reading

- Has limited comprehension, may be able to identify specific facts.
- Experience problems seeing the Big Picture.
- Understand environmental print (signs, logos)

Writing

- Can self-generate simple passages.
- 1st language words may be mixed into more complicated compositions.
- Sentences are short and use common words or phrases.

Advanced

Most of our students at Berry will fall into this range. The hardest bridge to cross is the one between advanced and high advanced. Advanced students will understand grade-appropriate English with language support.

Listening

- Usually understand elaborate directions and unfamiliar topics, but may need more time to process than a regular student.
- May occasionally ask speaker to slow down or repeat.

Speaking

- Participate comfortably in most conversations and academic discussions.
- Use abstract vocab.
- Make errors with complex grammar structures.

Reading

- Understand the meaning of most grade-appropriate words.
- Demonstrates main idea comprehension and identifies some supporting details.
- Still need visual support.

Writing

- Use grade-appropriate language yet often has marks of emergent writing.
- Exhibit many spelling errors, but grammar errors have reduced.

Advanced High

In almost all cases, an advanced high student will have been exited from ESL and will appear in your regular classes as a monitored student. Advanced High students will understand grade-appropriate English with minimal language support and perform in line with their peers on standardized tests.

Listening

- Understand the longest and most elaborate directions as well as speeches on unfamiliar topics.
- They will understand both main points and important details.

Speaking

- Participate in extended conversations and use grade-appropriate vocab.
- Use multiple verb tenses.
- Rarely has pronunciation issues.

Reading

- Will grasp main ideas (implicit and explicit) as well as details.
- Understand patterns as well as academic vocabulary words.
- Reading aloud should not be hindered by pronunciation.

Writing

- Able to write fluently while making few grammatical or spelling mistakes.
- Level of complexity and detail should rival native English-speaker peers.

One VERY important detail to remember is that even if you are only teaching an Advanced High student, they will still need that “minimal language support” in order to continue to be successful here at Berry.

ESL Student of the Week



Name: Lidizeth Rios

Grade: 8th

First language: Spanish

Fun personality fact: Lidizeth is by far my shyest student, which isn't surprising as she's only been in the US about a year. However, when she gets comfortable with a teacher or class, she'll open up.